

Frequently Asked Questions on the Food Policy

1. Why is the County telling employees what to eat?

Rather than telling employees what to eat, the County is simply making changes in the workplace that make it easier for employees to choose to eat healthy. Employees may of course still bring favorite beverages and snack foods from home, and many popular vending machine options will still be available.

The work environment can either undermine or promote the good intentions of an employee to make healthy choices. By creating a policy that promotes offering healthier choices, the County can support and encourage employees to make healthier food decisions at the workplace.

2. What food does this policy apply to?

This policy applies to foods and beverages:

- Sold in County-contracted food and beverage vending machines (except those vending machines that serve the inmate population in the custody of the Sheriff's Department);
- Purchased with County funds and served at County-sponsored meetings and events;
- Sold on County property for charitable fundraising efforts (this component is optional)

3. What types of foods and beverages will be sold in vending machines?

Vending machines will offer lower calorie, lower fat versions of many favorite snack and beverage items. Healthier options that might be sold include:

- Water, diet iced tea, and diet sodas
- Baked chips, granola and cereal bars, crackers, and low-fat cookies

A sample list of healthier snacks that will be offered in the vending machines is available from the "Resources" section of the PLACE Program website.



- 4. My department occasionally has potluck lunches, birthday parties, and some of us bring our lunch everyday. Do we have to bring in special foods that are low in fat and calories instead of our usual items?**

No, you do not have to bring in special low fat, low calorie foods for your potluck lunches, birthday parties or in your bagged lunches. This policy only limits the types of foods and beverages that are either sold in County-contracted food and beverage vending machines or purchased with County funds for County-sponsored meetings and events. You may continue to bring your favorite foods and drinks to work. However, bringing healthier foods to potlucks and parties is encouraged.

- 5. I don't like to drink diet soda and I keep a candy jar filled on my desk. Does this mean that I can't drink regular soda or eat my candy at work?**

What you bring to work to eat is your choice. You may continue to bring and keep your favorite candy and sodas at work. This policy only limits the food and beverages sold in County-contracted vending machines, food and beverages purchased with County funds and served at County-sponsored meetings, and, on an optional basis, food sold for workplace-based charitable fundraising. However, since the Food Policy is trying to increase your access to healthier food items at work, you are encouraged to share healthier food items with your colleagues. A “dried fruit jar” may not have the same ring as a “candy jar” but your co-workers might appreciate the healthier snack!

- 6. Why isn't there a healthier vending machine at my work?**

It's possible that your worksite vending machine is not a County-contracted vending machine. Since this policy only effects County-contracted vending machines, other machines that are not under County contract are not impacted. Typically, County-contracted vending machines are in County owned buildings. Whereas, vending machines in County leased buildings are usually not under County-contract.

Also, the food policy is being implemented gradually with some vending machine companies due to pre-existing contract agreements between the County and the company. So the healthier vending machines may take some time to reach your worksite.

